

I am writing to share feedback regarding HB 6574 **An Act Concerning Municipal Youth Camps**. The proposed bill will have a significant negative impact on Manchester's municipal day camp offerings. In Manchester, we believe that every child should have access to a safe and fun summer camp opportunity where they can thrive and grow. Fees are kept low and subsidized by local tax dollars. However, if passed, this bill would trigger mandates that would have a negative impact on the camp program and the fees charged to our residents. Our camp fees would double, or triple pricing out many families. Additionally, mandates would likely impact capacity as administrative oversight would cause us to downsize our program thereby offering less camp slots and serving fewer children.

Specifically concerns include:

- Increase in staffing needs for administrative staff to oversee cumbersome record keeping (child healthcare form, vaccine records, background checks, inspections etc...)
- Pricing out of residents as cost increases will be passed on to families in the form of higher camp fees.
- Unnecessary mandates around hiring requirements including nurses, waterfront directors, director of first aid etc... will add pressure to an already difficult hiring environment.
- Added layers of background checks and employment history checks through organizations like OEC and DCF could create a long wait period for approval with possible delays to the start of the summer camp program.
- Does OEC and DCF have capacity to handle the influx in these checks in a timely manner?
- This bill would add hundreds of camp sites to the list of OEC site inspections. Do they have capacity to complete inspections in a timely manner?
- Hundreds of individual care plans will have to be submitted and approved by OEC prior to camp. Then, the APRN/ Physician consultant train onsite staff on this plan prior to camper starting. This is required even for those with inhalers for asthma, epi pens etc.... How quickly can OEC turn this around. Often a parent may not even inform the Town of an inhaler until the day camp starts. What happens in that situation?

Making the camp environment safe for our young people should always be the top priority. Municipalities are keenly aware of this and center the importance of safeguarding our youth when planning, hiring and supervising summer camps. This bill will do little to improve safety but do tremendous damage to our families who count on and rely on affordable summer programs for their children. The Department of Leisure, Family and Recreation does not support HB 6574.